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purpose of enabling those within to close the passage from above by means of something in the nature of a portcullis. From a careful examination of the wall, in different places throughout its circumference, it appears to have been parapeted, the space between the parapet and the interior of the circle being (as was usual in amphitheatres) allotted to spectators, and accessible by the stair-case already noticed. In the centre of the area are the remains of the altar, or place of sacrifice, approached from the entrance of the building by a flagged pathway, which was discovered on raising the turf by which it is overgrown: around these are the ruins of a square building, but of comparatively modern construction—in fact, the place was resorted to by the Roman Catholics in the vicinity, for the purposes of worship, until some forty years back, when a small chapel for their accommodation was erected at the foot of the mountain—a certain proof of the traditional sanctity of the spot. It is a well known fact, that the early propagators of Christianity in Ireland were too wise, too good judges of human nature, to expect that men could be induced all at once, and without the possibility of relapse, to abandon forms, to desert, perhaps to destroy fanes hallowed to them, however mistakenly, by a thousand en-dearing associations: instead, therefore, of insisting upon, or attempting to accomplish anything of the kind, they retained the place of worship, while they changed the object of adoration. Hence we see the Christian Church and the symbol of atonement reared beside the tower of the Guebre. The fane of Baal became the temple of Jehovah. The Milcom of the Ammonite, the Ashtoreth of the Sidonian, gave place to the St. Columb and the Madonna of the Catholic; and for many an age the sacred fire continued to burn unquenched, for a Christian vesta, in St. Bridget of Kildare! The change extended from the hill and the altar to the valley and the fountain, and the poor devotee who tells his beads at the holy well of Fahan, or of Malin, little dreams that his Pagan ancestor held the same spring in equal reverence, under a different name and tutelage. Surely, my Lord, it is not unreasonable to conclude that a place of worship, so considerable as Greenan appears to have been, must have come in for its re-consecration, and continued more or less in the odour of sanctity, until the period I have mentioned.

The stones of which the building is formed are of the common grey schistus, but evidently selected with considerable attention as to size; and considering their exposure to the Atlantic storms for so many centuries, the decomposition is wonderfully small. In those parts of the wall which have been protected by the accumulation of the debris from above, the chiselling is yet sharp and the squareness perfect. The circumstance of its being a stone building adds considerably to the antiquarian interest which Greenan is calculated to excite; for, with the exception of the Staig Fort above mentioned, I am not aware of any other similar edifice being discovered in Ireland. Places of Sun-worship abound. Among the most remarkable may be instanced the Moat of Granard (or Grian-ard, the eminence of the sun), in Longford; and Greenmount (or Grian-mont, the mount of the sun), in Louth: the latter of which, situated as it is, close adjoining the most frequented road in Ireland, is passed daily, hourly, by travellers and tourists of all sorts, without exciting an observation. The virtuoso who will "compass sea and land" to see a few mouldering pillars, once sacred to Jupiter and Minerva, traverses the great Belfast road, wholly unconscious that he is passing almost within the shadow of one of the most perfect remains of Pagan sun-worship which this, or perhaps any other country in Europe exhibits. But both of these, as well as others of a minor description, are mounds (stupendous ones, certainly) of earth. Any that are of stone are, in point of architectural pretension, little beyond the ordinary cairn; nor do they appear to aim at a higher designation. One of the principal, I believe, exists in Antrim, at no great distance from Templepatrick, and is known by the name of Cairn Graney, or "the cairn of the sun."

I was a good deal surprised to find that the very existence of this building was unknown to so many of my acquaintances in Derry, which it stands within four miles of—and some of whom are persons of research and much

historical information; still more was that feeling excited by learning that it had (as far as I have been able to discover) escaped the particular observation of the surveying officers of engineers, who had actually a station on the walls of it: to be sure trigonometrical accuracy is one thing, and antiquarian lore another. In this respect, however, it has only shared the fate of numberless objects of curiosity and interest with which the county of Donegal abounds, but which have remained unexplored, or at least undescribed, until very lately, when my friend, the Rev. C. Otway, gave to the world his highly interesting, as well as delightfully written "Sketches" of some portion of the scenery around Kilmacrenan—to the fidelity of which, in a descriptive point of view, I am enabled to bear the fullest testimony. I sincerely wish he had crossed the Swilly to Greenan.

But, to return from this digression, it only remains to be mentioned, that the building was encircled by a double foss, the first about twenty yards from the wall, the second at a like distance beyond the first—both may be distinctly traced throughout the entire of their extent—and the visitor can hardly fail to observe that the turf between the building and the first foss is remarkable for the superiority of its verdure over any portion of the surrounding mountain grass lands.

Such, my Lord, is Greenan—a visit to which is of easy accomplishment, and will well repay the exertion; for, even putting Antiquarianism out of the question, the view from the place, on a clear day, is one of the finest that can be imagined. The boundless Atlantic—the grand estuaries of Foyle and Swilly—the Alpine scenery of Donegal, from Barnesmore to Birdstown—the basalt cliffs of Magilligan, and a large portion of Derry and Tyrone, are all placed beneath the eye, as in one vast map. To this may be added an additional gratification, if the visitor has the good fortune to be acquainted with a certain worthy friend and connection of mine, whose hospitable mansion lies embowered near the base of the mountain and to whom I am indebted for the assistance and facilities which have enabled me to attempt the foregoing description.

I have the honour to remain your Lordship's very obedient servant,

W. B.

Carrick, June, 1830.

ACCOUNT OF SOME SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBERS DISCOVERED NEAR CARRIGTOHILL, COUNTY OF CORK, AND AT BALLYHENDON, NEAR FERMOY, IN THE SAME COUNTY.

"Admiralty, 31st January, 1835.

"SIR,—In compliance with the wish expressed by T. G. in No. 127 of the Dublin Penny Journal, for information respecting the circular entrenchments, termed Danish Forts, so numerous in the South of Ireland, I beg leave to transmit to you a copy of a communication on this subject, made a few years since to the Society of Antiquaries, and which you are at liberty to send to your correspondent, or reprint in your Journal.

"With every good wish for the success of your publication, I remain, Sir, your very humble servant,

"T. CROFTON CROKER."

To the Editor of the Dublin Penny Journal.

Barnes, Surrey, Dec. 15, 1829.

My dear Sir,—When at Cork, in the early part of the present year, I was informed that some subterranean chambers had been recently discovered on a farm named Garranes, in the parish of Carrigtohill, about nine miles east of that city.

By the kindness of Mr. Cummins, the proprietor of the ground, I was afforded an opportunity of examining these chambers, in company with Mr. Robert O Callaghan Newenham, whose pencil has so skilfully illustrated the picturesque antiquities of Ireland. They are situated within one of those circular entrenchments, popularly (but I am inclined to think incorrectly) termed "Danish Forts." The diameter of this entrenchment is one hundred and twenty feet; and at the third of that space from the south side appeared a circular pit, about seven feet in depth, and measuring five feet and a half in diameter.

From this pit (which probably had been a chamber, the roof having fallen in,) two holes, resembling the entrances to fox-earths, descended at an angle of about twenty degrees into chambers of a depressed beehive-like shape, excavated from the soil, which is a stiff clay mixed with gravel. These holes or passages (in size barely sufficient to allow a man to creep through them) respectively led to a chamber formed, as I have just described, without any masonry, and from each of these a like communication led to a third chamber, from which there was a similar passage into a fourth. Here terminated our examination, in consequence of finding that the passage into a fifth chamber was blocked up with large stones, two or three of which we removed, but from the confined space the workman was placed in, it would have been impossible for us to have opened this communication without more time and labour than we had it in our power to devote to the investigation.

The dimensions of the chambers varied from seven to eight feet in diameter, and in form they were between the oval and the circle. I annex a plan,* as it will convey at a glance a better idea of their relative situations than can be done by description; and also a section of the entrenchment, with measurements.†

When the discovery of these chambers was made, a considerable quantity of charcoal was found in them, and the fragment of a quern or hand-mill.

It may not be irrelevant to mention, that on Mr. Cummins's farm at Garranes there are five circular entrenchments or forts, all of which we visited. At the distance of about fifty yards from one of these, on the descent of a hill, a spot was pointed out to us, as the entrance of a passage or tunnel leading into chambers beneath the fort; but it had been closed up for many years by the falling in of the earth. Our informant, who was an old man, stated, that when a boy he remembers to have gone some way into this passage, and that the sides were lined with very large stones, upon which great flags rested and formed the roof.

We caused an excavation to be made here for a short time, but we were obliged to abandon the undertaking, without discovering the entrance, although from the vast quantity of charcoal turned up, there appeared to be little doubt that the information given to us was correct.

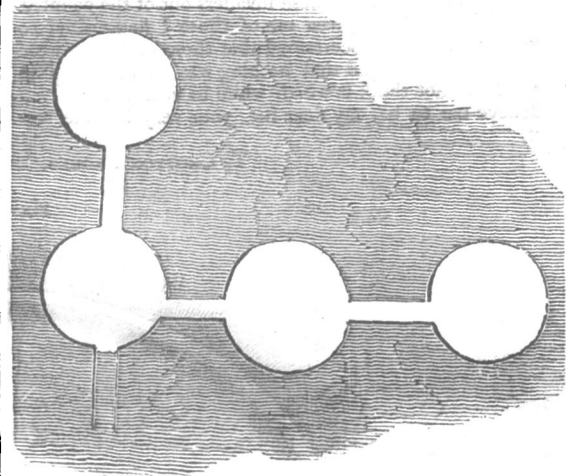
Within a circle of five miles round Garranes there are no less than fourteen circular entrenchments remaining. They are called by the country people, when speaking of them in Irish, as far as I can perceive, indifferently "Lis" and "Rath," and in English, "the Danes' Fort," or "the old Fort." The tradition of the peasantry is, that the Irish, after the battle of Clontarf, when the Danes retreated to these subterranean chambers for security, kindled large fires at the entrance, the smoke of which either suffocated those within, or compelled them to crawl forth; and thus were the invaders destroyed. Another popular notion is, that by means of these forts, which are said (and with some foundation) to have been constructed within view of each other, a communication was kept up by the Danes throughout the country. This was effected by means of fires, one or more of which were lighted to convey certain pieces of intelligence.

I have repeated these traditions because they are so general, and have no doubt that they originated from the frequent discovery of charcoal in and about the entrenchments. To me it appears probable that these works were thrown up by the native Irish around their little wigwam settlements, as a defence against any sudden attack from an enemy or from wolves, and that subterranean chambers or cellars were formed for granaries, or as secure depositories in time of danger for their rude property.‡ That

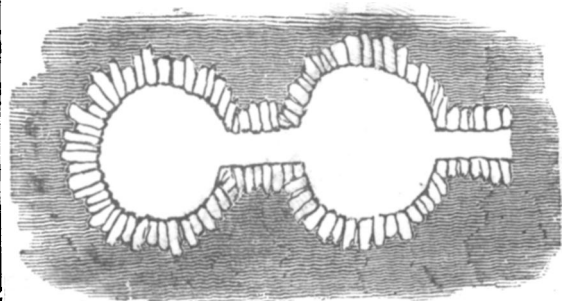
so many of these entrenchments should remain in nearly a perfect state, is to be attributed to the gross superstition of the peasantry, who regard them as "Δηιδ" (haunted) places, inhabited by "sheoges," "good people" or fairies, and believe that some severe misfortune is sure to befall the person who meddles with them.

I beg to add the copy of a letter which I have received from Mr. Newenham, containing some further particulars respecting the subterranean chambers of the south of Ireland:

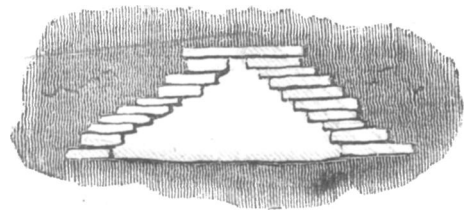
"Since writing my last letter I have been exploring under-ground chambers by the dozen, and find them, to my surprise, much more frequent than even we had imagined. My first dive was into one set on the lands of



Ballyhendon, within two miles of Fermoy, precisely similar in formation to those we examined near Carrigtohill. On coming out I gave my guide a couple of shillings, which so pleased his numerous friends, that they flocked round me, each offering to lead me to others; so that you would have thought the whole country resembled a beehive. I chose out a few of the most intelligent, and followed them. In the course of an hour I visited five sets, within a circuit of two miles, those on Mr. Joyce's farm



as well as a set at Kilcrumpher, differ from the others in



being built or lined with stone. We had candles and spades, so that every corner was explored, but no discovery made, except decayed bones and charcoal. The bones appeared to be those of the ox, but little remained except the joints. In the inner chamber of those on Mr

* Figure I.

† Figure II.

‡ This conjecture is supported by the following passage in Tacitus, who describes a similar practice among the old Germans: "Solent et subterraneos specus aperire, eosque multo insuper fimo onerant, suffugium hiemi, et receptaculum frugibus, quia rigorem frigorum ejusmodi locis molliunt: et si quando hostis advenit, aperta populatur, abdita autem et defossa, aut ignorantur aut eo ipso fallunt, quod quaerenda sunt." Cap. 16.

Joyce's farm, I perceived a small square aperture, as if to admit air: it did not rise perpendicularly, but sloped upwards at an angle of about seventy degrees. A fourth excavation, near the third at Kilcrumpher, consisted of long galleries only; at least we could discover no chambers. The fifth at Ballyhooly was too much choaked up to admit of examination. None of these were connected with ancient entrenchments or forts, though there appeared several in the immediate neighbourhood, and the remains of two cromlechs. There were also three natural caverns, in which there were marks of fire.

"Some of these excavations had been discovered forty years ago; others recently and accidentally. The country people say that they discover new chambers every year, all of the same shape and size. They are impressed with a belief that the Danes used them to hide in, when the Irish wished to drive these invaders out of the country. Finding the accounts given me of those I had visited so correct, and having ascertained that these chambers were all so nearly alike, and that nothing was to be found in them, I did not think it worth while to visit more."

Believe me to be, my dear Sir, your very humble servant,

T. CROFTON CROKER.

P. S.—I have just received a letter from Doone Glebe, in the county of Limerick, giving an account (which I regret is conveyed in such general terms) of the levelling of a "Danish Fort" in the neighbouring mountains, on some ground belonging to Mr. White. About fourteen feet from the surface, in the centre of the Fort, a number of silver coins were found, and a spur of gold, which is said to be in Mr. White's possession. Several stone jars were also discovered in subterranean chambers, but they were all broken or lost by the falling in of the earth, except one, which Mr. White sent to Mr. Coote. This is of a light brown mottled stone-ware, highly ornamented; and a drawing of it, with the measurements, has been forwarded to the Gentleman's Magazine. One of the broken jars was described as "a beautiful royal purple vase, resembling very fine China."*

To Nicholas Carlisle, Esq. &c. &c.

* I have since seen one or two of these jars, and they do not appear to be of more ancient manufacture than the time of Elizabeth. They are what were called "Grey-beards" at that period.

T. C. C.

31st Jan. 1835.

Figure I.

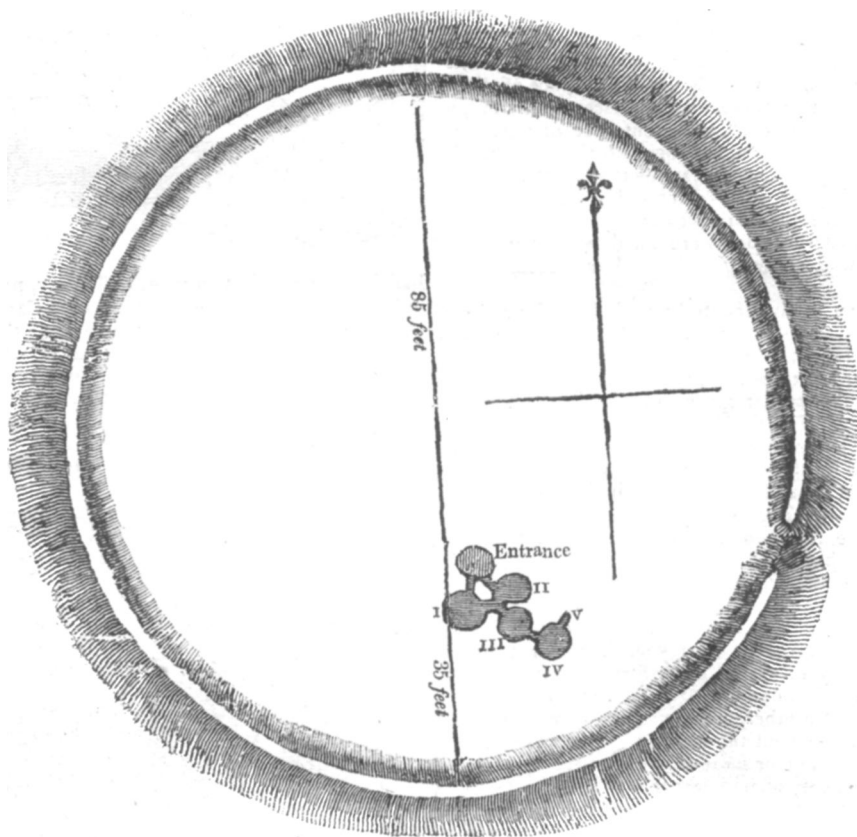
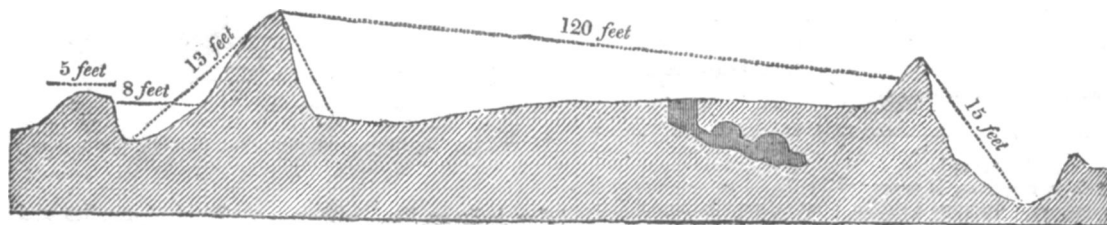


Figure II.



PLAN AND SECTION OF SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBERS AT CARIGTOHILL, NEAR CORK.